2 Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1939
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437 any type of exchange of goods that actually existed in pre-European days, as apart from the joint consumption and pooling of food within the different kinship units. Formerly it seems clear that, [438] except for food brought to the capital, the only goods which circulated about the country were articles such as ironwork—chiefly hoes—brought from the surrounding tribes, salt carried from the local salt-pans near Mpika, and the various objects such as guns and cloth traded by caravans of Arabs. In most of these cases the goods were brought to the chiefs—whether given as tribute by conquered peoples or fetched by parties of his men. Commoners [439 263] occasionally went to the Lunda area to fetch hoes, or to the salt-pans to bring back balls of salt.[1] Fish was carried as tribute from the bigger rivers or fishing pools, but probably not traded to commoners to any extent.

438 The environmental conditions of the Bemba account to some extent for their poor development of trade, since conditions are, generally speaking, so uniform in this area that there is little reason for one district to exchange goods with another. In the neighbouring swamp area, on the other hand, the Bisa, Ushi, Unga, and other tribelets have control of great supplies of fish, not possessed by the other plateau natives, and they live on small islands each of which seems to lack one essential commodity—whether it is firewood, clay for pots, tall trees for canoe-building, soil for millet for brewing, &c.; and here the people, unlike the Bemba, live by trade with each other and with the European. But besides their environment the history of the Bemba probably limits their trading interests. A dominant tribe can get what it wants from subject peoples and an autocratic chief can monopolize such commodities as ivory, salt, or Arab goods so that the commoner does not reckon to trade with them at all. The Bemba concepts of wealth just described also affect their desire to barter or sell, and make it difficult for them to do so.

But, whatever the reason, the Bemba of to-day have no tradition of commerce, no habit of exchange, and as yet no abilities in this direction. They barter very little and have taken poor advantage of the Government's recent efforts to introduce markets at Kasama, Mpika, and Chinsali.[2] Without roads suitable for motor transport

[1] I am not clear what these parties took as goods to trade with, but heard of particular cases where men worked for the hoes they needed.

[2] The Pim Report [Report of the Commission appointed to inquire into the

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such markets could hardly develop to a large extent, since the villages are widely dispersed, and a woman bringing in food to sell is limited by the weight she can carry on her head, i.e. about 50 lb.[1] But nevertheless it seems clear that the Bemba differ strikingly from other tribes in their ability to take advantage of modern methods of trade. For instance, no hawkers licences were issued in the Kasama district in 1937, whereas fifty-five were issued among the cattle-owning Mambwe round Abercorn.[2]

The types of trade that I observed among the Bemba in 1934 were as follows: (*a*) The occasional hawking of such objects as snuff, baskets, mats, or fish by members of surrounding tribes, e.g. the Nsenga from the Loangwa valley, who are great traders; (*b*) occasional expeditions made by the Bemba to other districts to fetch supplies of something they need, e.g. fish from the swamps; (*c*) sporadic exchanges of food for money or goods between local natives during the hunger season; (*d*) barter or sale of food to natives permanently living in white employment and therefore often without their own gardens; (*e*) the barter or sale of craft goods such as axes, baskets, mats, &c.; (*f*) the sale of grain to Europeans. Except in the case of the sales to town natives or to Europeans, none of these forms of exchange is organized or even continuous. The traffic appears to consist of a series of isolated acts which have little reference to previous transactions of the kind, and are not governed by any recognized system of comparative values.

Thus in the remoter villages the people will tell you, 'A man came through the village yesterday and sold us snuff—a lump like this (shown by a gesture)—for an eating basket of grain', and it is clear that this was a single instance and that nothing like a regular schedule of prices or rates of exchange governed the transaction. The hawker may not appear again for a year or two. The expeditions made by the Bemba themselves to surrounding territories have something entirely casual about them. I have seen parties of young men leaving a Bemba village to 'buy fish' among the Bisa of the swamps. Such groups would go off in holiday spirits,

[1] Financial and Economic Position of N. Rhodesia. Colonial 145], 1938, p. 28, comments on the poor success of these markets; and cf. also the figures as to the number of native-owned stores in the district as 6 only in 1935, p. 53. Native Affairs Report of the N. R. Government, 1935.

[2] The lack of a smaller coin than the 3*d.* bits formerly prevented native trade developing, but the Government has introduced cupro-nickel 1½*d.* bits since 1934.

[3] Ibid., 1937, p. 53.

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439 combining the excursion with a series of visits to relatives on the way. They usually seemed to have kinsmen in the villages to which they were going from whom they hoped to get extra presents of fish, to buy more cheaply than usual or, at any rate, to live for a week or so on fish! They were prepared to walk three or four days to their destination and the same distance back, and to return with two or three baskets of fish to last them during the ensuing months. The whole affair struck one as more like a picnic expedition undertaken, Bemba-fashion, on a sudden impulse, than as part of an organized economic undertaking, and it seems that such journeys to other districts to fetch particular local commodities are similar to those made in the old days at the command of a chief. But it must be emphasized that this form of barter was an occasional event rather a habit of life, and it still is so to-day.

437 It is only in the case of the fish trade from the Bangweolu swamps that a regular price is charged per basket. During the hunger season the food situation could be greatly eased by regular barter, since there is often considerable inequality between different villages as to their supplies, but not only is there no regular marketing place in the villages, but all such acts of exchange are completed by natives who are in too great a hurry, too hungry, or too much at the mercy of the whim of the moment to strike what to us would be a sound economic bargain. At this season the people seem to plunge into a series of exchanges of one food for another on which the outsider is inclined to think that they lose each time. A few examples will make this clear. Thus, in January 1934, I saw three women with empty granaries go a journey of twenty-five miles to buy millet with some tobacco one of them had been presented with. They returned with three carrying-baskets of grain (i.e. less than the value of the tobacco), which they started to use. One immediately began to trade some of her millet for beans, another brewed some beer with a large part of the grain in order, she said, to make a shilling to buy more millet again. This was obviously not an economic proposition, since her shilling would have bought her very little new grain at the end of another twenty-five-mile walk, but with the fatalistic attitude produced by some weeks of food shortage, and lack of the habit of regular trading, she probably preferred the exhilaration of a beer drink to a careful hoarding and measuring of her supplies. In the same village a woman had returned from the mines two years ago with five cotton

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437 forging of iron axe-blades or spear-heads—exchange their articles for goods, service, or money. But I never met a man who traded regularly in this fashion, who lived on the proceeds of his industry, or who travelled about the country selling his wares. In fact, the greatest initiative I ever noted was shown by one of Citimukulu's old hereditary priests, who sold baskets to villagers for chickens, and then sold the latter, ten or twelve at a time, to Europeans.

•439 Trade with Europeans consists for the main part of sales of grain to the Government stations or missions. In 1934 the price varied from ½*d.* a lb. during harvest months to 1½*d.* during the rainy season [435] in the Chinsali area. The Government station at Mpika also bought £140 of salt at 1*d.* a lb. But it is difficult to estimate the total amount of food sold over the whole area.

437 To conclude, it can be said that the Bemba, owing to their particular environment and social organization, reckon to live by means of mutual support within their kinship groups, and only resort to the barter or sale of the goods they need sporadically, or on occasions of necessity. Then either temperament or their patterns of economic thought make them extraordinarily inept, according to European standards. Marketing, like any other form of economic activity, is evidently based on a system of values developed in earliest youth, and the trading instinct seems to be difficult to acquire by a people who have not been through such a training.

437 The contrast between Bemba children and those of the Bisa of the 184 fishing villages in the Bangweolu swamps is striking. There the children are accustomed from earliest infancy to hear the sales of fish and other commodities discussed, and I found that they themselves continually talked of the values of different objects, and even of their own services. When I asked them to do something for me they replied automatically, 'How much will you give me? Yes, but what kind of beads and how many?' Having struck their bargain, they kept to it. The Bemba children, on the other hand, accepted such requests for help by politely clapping their hands, as to a chief. They never bargained or refused, but on the other hand they considered their services made me liable to help them and feed them, and they were constantly on the look-out for their dues. They left the work if they became convinced, for some reason or other, that I did not 'like' them. In Bemba society economic transactions are based on a system of personal relationships—ties

The former make millet gardens on such land as is clear of water and subsequently plant mounded cassava. Such a two-year sequence may be continued for several years, but many groups abandon cultivation after the first two years. Village gardens are also planted with cassava, and bananas and pineapples are grown. In such gardens, made on low sandbanks denuded of soil by years of cultivation, cassava seldom grows to full maturity owing to the hunger of the cultivators. Some people make an annual migration to the Lunga plain to plant millet, others barter fish for meal. Very little in the way of subsidiary crops is found beyond a little kaffir corn, some beans and sweet potatoes. In the territory of Chief Kasoma[1] the people make a mass migration to cultivable areas in the dry season, June to November.

The Twa cultivate little, relying mainly on their fishing with which they get meal by trading. A certain amount of cassava cultivation is found here and there.

HUNTING AND FISHING

While every Bemba is a hunter by inclination, present shortage of game prevents this desire from being fully gratified. While Melland[2] records the existence of organized hunters' guilds and specialized hunters among the Kaonde these do not at present exist among the Bemba, although elephant hunters formerly were specialists. Hunting by traps and pits is neither an organized nor a specialized activity. Net hunting demands communal effort and is often carried out as a form of divination. There is little information on the hunting activities of the other groups; among the swamp peoples (Unga, Twa, Bisa) hunting is subordinated to fishing but the meat of a certain antelope (*lechwe*) was greatly in demand and these animals were hunted so persistently that a protection law has only prevented, recently, their extinction. There was a certain amount of trade in *lechwe* skins worked in designs.

Fishing is not a major activity, though fish is greatly appreciated as a relish and caught whenever possible. There is no regular trade in fish, nor is fishing a whole-time occupation except for certain groups living on the banks of the larger rivers, where there are definite fishing villages with permanent sites where fishing is carried on all the year round, and there is quite a complex system of pond and weir ownership.

Fish are caught by three chief methods: by poisoning, by weirs and by nets. Poisoning is a communal and unskilled activity carried out at the end of the dry season (August-November). Weirs are only in use in November and December before the crocodiles become a menace. Only one type of net is used, a rectangular variety, stretched across the river, at the beginning and end of the dry season.

It is among the swamp peoples, however - the Unga, Twa and, to a lesser extent, the Bisa - that fishing attains greatest importance. Here the land resources are so depleted, by the over-cultivation of areas which are diminishing in size through increasing inundation, that the growing population

(1) Brelsford, S. 1946. (2) Melland, 1923.

226 must fish or starve. Fish, however, is not only regarded as food, but is
439 also used as an article of trade. The supply in Lake Bangweulu seems to be virtually inexhaustible. The Unga can sell their fish for meal at a good price on the Copperbelt and elsewhere and are therefore unwilling to leave this otherwise undesirable habitat.

226 A number of methods of fishing are employed, such as netting, the setting of lines, trapping fish in baskets set in weirs, catching fish in baskets at low water, and poisoning. The diversity of fishing methods is not as great as it is for instance among the Lozi further south,(1) but since the Unga are able to catch plenty of fish with their traditional technique, improvements of method seem unlikely.

226 Netting grounds are available to all, but weirs have a fixed owner-
423 ship. In certain circumstances a chief may reallocate a weir, but generally the owner has the absolute right of use. He calls in friends and relatives to fish and to repair the weir and each keeps the fish caught in his own basket.

439 Fish may either be sold at the waterside or taken to Kapalala - the ferry over the Luapula at the Congo border - or to the markets on the Copperbelt. A better price is obtainable at the latter but against that has to be set the time involved and expense incurred (such as the purchase of a bicycle or the canoe to Kapalala, and thence by lorry to Ndola). Of those selling at the waterside, some sell to African consumers, some to middlemen, some to Missions and some to representatives of European firms. Many fishermen, however, find their way to Mufulira market on the Copperbelt to market their own fish.(2)

The following figures taken by Brelsford in 1943 from some 250 Unga fishermen show the distribution of their choice:-(3)

64% sold their fish either in Kapalala or Ndola.
12% sold on the mainland at places like Fort Rosebery.
24% sold at the waterside.

CRAFTS

412 Bemba equipment is of the simplest kind. There are only four main implements: an axe-blade, locally forged and fixed into a wooden haft,(4) used for clearing the bush and most other wood-cutting jobs; iron hoe
[411] blades, also fixed into wooden hafts, were formerly traded from the Lunda; a spear, locally forged, used in war, hunting and fishing; and, finally the bow, now rarely made. These tools are of the simplest kind, neither carved nor decorated and, generally speaking, crafts are poorly developed. Decorative iron-work, which reached a high level of development among the
325 Lake peoples, hardly exists. Iron-smelting is still practised among the Aushi(5) and was recently revived among the Chishinga(6) group, formerly

(1) Gluckman, 1941. (2) Brelsford, c. 1947.
(3) Brelsford, L. 1946, gives a more detailed treatment on the subject.
(4) Mass produced European tools are now superseding the others.
(5) Barnes, 1951.
(6) Brelsford, T. 1949.

131 towards the Luapula and, in several respects, markedly differing from the surrounding plateau country.

226 The abundance of fish in the Luapula, which is free from rapids and easily navigable below Johnston Falls near the mouth of the Luongo, makes fishing an important economic pursuit in which virtually all the adult male population participate and to which are attached elaborate ritual observances. (see below p.94) Besides being an important item in the native diet, fish constitutes the chief trading asset of the country.

134 On the plateau, where soils are poorer and the population is almost exclusively dependent on agriculture for its livelihood, the shifting *citemene* system of cultivation is the rule. In the valley, however, the 241 rich alluvial deposits make possible a semi-permanent mound cultivation; this removes the necessity for changing village sites periodically and results in a greater stability. Cassava, of little account on the plateau, where finger millet and Kaffir corn predominate, is the staple food crop in the valley.

186 Common traditions accumulated over two centuries, during which the valley constituted the core of Kazembe's kingdom, have made the population conscious and proud of its past.

611 The patrilineal reckoning of descent introduced and established by the Lunda, as well as their tribal heterogeneity, mark the valley peoples off from the matrilineal and ethnically homogeneous neighbouring tribes: the Shila-Katya (north west), Shila (north), Lungu, Chishinga (east), Mukulo, Aushi (south), Lamba (south-west), and Lunetwa (west).

631 The Kazembe is now Paramount over the western (Northern Rhodesia) side of the valley, ruling directly in the province surrounding his capital. His kingdom is divided into eight chiefdoms, ruled by the following chiefs (from Lake Mweru southward): Kashwali, Kanyembo, Kazembe himself, Lukwesa, Lubunda, Kashiba, Mulundu, and Katuta. Sub-chiefs Muyembe and Kapesa administer two districts carved out of the metropolitan chiefdom but cannot hold courts. Lubunda, Mulundu, Katuta and Kapesa are of Chishinga extraction, the others are Lunda.

Kilwa island, with its Swahili chief Nahimba, now falls outside the Kazembe's kingdom.

TRIBAL MIXTURE

166 As a result of piecemeal settlement and frequent inter-marriage the com-
ponent tribal groups are as a rule distributed over the whole territory.
619 Local concentrations occur nevertheless: the Shila and Tabwa predominate in the extreme north, the Lungu in the Mulele district, the Chishinga in the Mununshi valley. A Bemba colony occupies land between Lake Mofwe and Lake Mweru granted to Mwamambupa in return for the assistance given by his brother Mwabe, a Bemba chief, in opposing the invading Beyeke and re-establishing the fugitive Kazembe. On Kilwa island the descendants of Swahili slavers and Nyamwezi copper traders live alongside the aboriginal Shila.

The bulk of the population is made up of the Shila, Lunda, Chishinga,

5:Slaski E-4 (no date) 1950 FQ5 Bemba FQ5

Luapula Peoples

grown extensively in the past and some Kazembes[1] were acknowledged hashish-addicts. 276

TRADE

Slaves and ivory (exchanged for cloth and merchandise) were for a long period the main trading assets of the country.[2] Salt, otter-skins and beeswax[3] were other traded commodities. The valley fish used to be exchanged for the mushrooms, honey and wild fruits of the plateau. It is still bartered with the Lungu *citeene* cultivators for millet, from which hot beer (*kutubi*) is brewed. Trade with the Swahili, Arab and European merchants was the Kazembe's monopoly.[4] Ivory came mostly from the Congo side of the Luapula being brought as tribute.[5] Fish, the chief export article at the present time, is marketed in the mining areas of the Belgian Congo, only a small proportion going to the Rhodesian Copperbelt.[6] Kasenga, with its ice factory and road connection with Elisabethville, is the local distribution centre. Small quantities of cassava and bananas are also offered for sale there. 439 ●

ECONOMIC CHANGE

Labour migration to the mines and sales of fish are the most noticeable signs of economic change. Subsistence agriculture prevails although, with the establishment of co-operative farms, the growing of cash crops may develop. 178

CRAFTS

Iron-ore, abundant in the hillside country to the east, was smelted and iron was worked[7] until the advent of the British South Africa Company. Imported trade goods have since displaced native-made hoes, axe-heads, knives and spears. 325

Cotton spinning and weaving are other crafts which have fallen into decay.[8] The rough cotton cloth mentioned by Livingstone[9] is no longer made. Mats woven from reeds, papyrus and the leaf of the *mukalala* palm and split bamboo baskets are still made by men after the rains when the fishing season is over.[10] Pottery-making was confined to women. The men worked wood and leather, dressed skins and prepared barkcloth. They hollowed dug-outs, carved wooden plates and crudely finished figures of ritual significance.[11] Dyes were procured from plants and trees and a tree-bark infusion was used in treating wounds.[12] Potash salt was extracted from plant ashes.[13] The method widely used among the Tabwa and Bena Kabwili on the north-eastern fringe of Lake Mweru,[14] where a brownish salt is obtained by filtering water through salpetrous earth and evaporating the brine,[15] may Also have been employed 28 32 [386] [317]

(1) Crawford, op.cit., pp.99, 100.
(2) Burton, p.130; Gamitto, I, p.398.
(3) Valdez, II, p.187.
(4) Burton, p.109.
(5) ibid., p.188.
(6) Brelsford, 2, 1947, p.70.
(7) Livingstone, I, p.307.
(8) Crawford, 2, opp.194.
(9) op.cit., p.267.
(10) Moore, 1937.
(11) Valdez, II, p.218.
(12) Gamitto, I, p.386.
(13) Valdez, op.cit., p.246.
(14) Livingstone, op.cit., p.223.
(15) Described in some detail by Moore.